



**US Army Corps  
of Engineers®**

St. Paul District

[www.mvp.usace.army.mil](http://www.mvp.usace.army.mil)

**Public Affairs**

# Corps Facts

Fountain City Service Base

Fountain City, Wis.

Sept. 13, 2006

FS-19

The Fountain City Service Base, located in Fountain City, Wis., plays an essential role in supporting the Corps of Engineers effort to improve navigation on the Upper Mississippi River north of Guttenberg, Iowa. The Corps has used the boatyard for the construction, repair and maintenance of vessels and equipment used for river improvement projects for more than a century.

## History

The Fountain City Service Base, or boatyard, is located on a 3.6-acre tract of land between the Mississippi River and Highway 35. The site was chosen because Fountain City has a natural protective harbor formed by the widening mouth of Waumandee Creek as it joins the Mississippi River at the north end of town. The Corps purchased the land in 1894 and began using it as a boatyard in 1895. As the number and complexity of navigation projects on the Upper Mississippi River expanded, the Corps constructed an extensive fleet of boats of various types to do its work. More than 200 towboats, tenders, snag boats, dipper and hydraulic dredges, quarter boats, building boats, barges, launches and skiffs have been serviced at the boatyard in the years since 1895. All of these vessels were repaired and maintained at the Fountain City Service Base, and, additionally, a number of them were constructed on the premises.

## Mission

Work at the boatyard includes major welding repairs on barges and floating plant equipment, as well as much of the St. Paul District's machine shop and mechanical repair work. The boatyard has the necessary heavy equipment, such as cranes, welders, compressors and blasting and painting tools, to support and maintain the district's locks and dams and floating plant. The maintenance of the nine-foot channel is primarily the responsibility of the Fountain City crew, and its personnel is busy each season surveying, dredging and making repairs to piers and dikes. The boatyard is also called home for the current St. Paul District fleet, including the Dredge Thompson and the Dredge Goetz.